

## **Appendix F. Constituent Involvement, Public and Peer Review Process**

### **F.1 Constituent Involvement**

Broad participation in the development of the ARMP improves the overall quality of the plan, the effectiveness of its management and recovery portions, and the Department's ability to implement the plan. Public involvement in the development of the plan ensures that decision makers consider a variety of perspectives which might otherwise not be available to them, addressing topics such as biological characteristics of the resource, the fishery, non-consumptive considerations, ecological considerations, and economic and social issues related to the resource. In addition, involving the public in the development of the plan includes them in the responsibility of sustainable management of the resource. The public will also be involved in the adoption of the plan, in addition to its implementation and amendment.

The draft ARMP has been developed with the input of various constituents, including the Recreational Abalone Advisory Committee, commercial abalone fishermen, the ARMP Advisory Panel, and members of the general public. As the Department developed concepts to be considered for the draft ARMP, it received constituent input on those concepts in addition to other ideas. The Department began the process of gathering public input for the development of the ARMP in July 2000, when it held a workshop for commercial abalone constituents. In fall 2001, the Department established an Advisory Panel for the ARMP. The panel is composed of members and alternates who represent recreational anglers and divers, environmental organizations, aquaculturists, and academia. The panelists were selected to reflect a diversity of interests and expertise in abalone and issues related to abalone. The first advisory panel workshop was held on 16 November 2001 at the Los Alamitos CDFG office. The focus of this workshop was the recovery of abalone resources in California. The ARMP advisory panel and Recreational Abalone Advisory Panel then participated in a workshop to provide input on the management of California's abalone on 15 March 2002, in Oakland. At the November and March workshops, members of the general public also provided input.

An early draft of the ARMP was made available for informal public review on the Department's web site (<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd>) and Department offices. In addition, two town hall meetings were held in September 2002 to further provide the public with the opportunity to become more informed, ask questions, and make recommendations for the ARMP. Written comments were due to the Department by 5:00 p.m. October 4, 2002. Informal public comments were reviewed and summarized, and appropriate changes were made to the draft ARMP. Appendix G contains summaries of the public input events which occurred during the evolution of the draft ARMP, and a summary of the public comments.

The time line for the development of the draft ARMP, which included the dates of workshops, town hall meetings, and the informal public review period, was posted on the Department's web site. To inform the public of the availability of the draft ARMP for informal public review, a news release was distributed to over 500 media contacts, including reporters, major media outlets, legislators, and natural resource organizations.

In addition, post cards and emails announcing the availability of the draft ARMP were sent to constituents interested in abalone issues.

## **F.2 Peer Review**

The Sea Grant Cooperative Extension program administered the independent peer review of the draft ARMP. Sea Grant was responsible for acquiring the services of appropriately qualified experts and for providing a written report to the Department. Department staff may accept the peer review findings, in whole or in part, and revise the document accordingly. If the Department disagrees with any aspect of the peer review findings, it will explain the basis for disagreement. The Department will submit the peer review report to the Commission.